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SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Estonian SSR)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE DISTR. 15 Feb. 1952

SUBJECT Tartu Airfield

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. The airfield northeast of Tartu (58°22'N/26°42'E), Estonian SSR, had a concrete E-W runway, about 30x2,400 meters. The runway was being widened by 9 meters. The excavated expansion strip of an estimated depth of 25 to 30 cm was filled with squared stones and topped with concrete. A taxiway, 15x400 meters, was constructed in the western extension of the runway. Another taxiway, 10 meters wide, started at the western end of the runway, looped first and then ran parallel to the runway about 50 meters north of it. Taxiway and circular taxiway were not concrete but were paved with small square stones. Round aprons 20 meters in diameter, called rondelles, were dug on both sides of the new taxiway to a depth of 60 cm. Soviets said that concrete parking sites were to be constructed there. Six such round places were being prepared. (1)
2. The buildings at the field included two hangars, reconstructed in the fall of 1945, one three-story administration and quartering building, one two-story officers' club, two barracks buildings, allegedly new, and one radio station.
3. The field was occupied by 36 single-engine aircraft. According to an AA artilleryman the planes were IL-2s. (2)
4. The airfield was on the northeastern perimeter of Tartu. It was noticed on the expansion plan that the field was about 1½ x 2½ km, or about three times as large as the old field. The area which sloped southeast of the field was levelled. A railroad spur track from the town and across the Embakh River was drawn on the construction plan. A bridge across the river was under construction. Grading for the spur track was being done in [] (3)
5. An E-W runway, 50 x 1,500 meters, was completed by October 1946. The runway was expanded 500 meters to the east after October 1946. The subgrade, 80 to 100 cm deep, was filled with crushed stones, and sand, and was rolled and surfaced with about 10 cm of concrete. While the concrete was still slightly wet it was topped with hexagonal concrete slabs, 120 cm in diameter, about 15 cm thick and reinforced by rod irons. Construction work was in progress in [] No construction

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work was observed in [] when aircraft took off from the field. Two parallel taxiways, each about 20 x 800 meters, started at the runway and turned at a right angle to the south. They were constructed in the same manner as the runway. The taxiway bed was 40 to 50 cm deep. The construction plan indicated that a second runway, 50 x about 2000 meters, was planned to extend from the western end of the first runway toward the southeast. No construction work on the scheduled runway was observed in [] but work was in progress in []. Aircraft took off in the direction of the runway in [].

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6. Buildings at the field included: Two hangars, about 70 x 80 meters, steel structures with vaulted sheet metal roofs, built on the foundations of two old hangars and completed by [] a three-story barracks building, 10 x 30 meters, for the airfield personnel, constructed on the foundation of a ruin and completed by March 1946; and a workshop which was also built on the foundation of an old building.

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7. PWs, former air force soldiers, said that about 80 IL-10s and 10 IL-2s were stationed at the field in []. Prior to that date only individual flights were made. Flying was intensive during the short periods of observation in 1947, 1948 and 1949. Parachuting was particularly noticed. The jumps were made from individual aircraft or from 10 to 15 aircraft at the same time. Two men would jump from each plane. There was intensive night flying in [] (5).

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Comments.

- (1) The information on the improvement of the field after World War II confirms the statements on the years between 1946 and 1948. Most of the large scale extension work was probably completed by the spring []. The runway length of 2,400 meters seems to be too large.
- (2) Although fighters were repeatedly reported at the field the occupation by ground attack aircraft is believed correct. IL-10s were probably stationed at the field at the end of the period of observation.
- (3) The information on the construction of a railroad spur track and the runway, the total length of which is not used by ground attack aircraft, indicates that there is intensive activity at the field.
- (4) The runway length of 2,000 meters is believed correct. The field is serviceable for modern fighter units because of its size and the length of the runway.
- (5) The flying activity indicates that a ground attack regiment is stationed at the field and that the personnel are trained in formation flying. The report again confirms that training in night flying was intensified after the summer of [].

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